

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 MMO-01 CU-02 CPR-01 NSC-05 PA-01 SS-15

USIA-06 PRS-01 PM-04 DODE-00 H-02 IO-13 CIAE-00

INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 SP-02 OMB-01 /077 W

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R 071005Z JUL 76

FM AMEMBASSY ANKARA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4156

INFO AMEMBASSY ATHENS

AMEMBASSY NICOSIA

AMCONSUL ADANA

AMCONSUL ISTANBUL

AMCONSUL IZMIR

C O N F I D E N T I A L ANKARA 5169

E.O.11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, MASS, TU

SUBJECT: BICENTENNIAL RECEPTION

1. IF ATTENDANCE AT OUR JULY 4 CELEBRATION THIS YEAR CAN BE CONSIDERED A BAROMETER OF TURKISH-AMERICAN FRIENDSHIP, THE TIES BETWEEN THE TWO COUNTRIES REMAIN VERY STRONG AT THE PERSONAL AND WORKING LEVEL. IN CONTRAST WITH LAST YEAR WHEN WE INVITED ONLY 200 PERSONS BECAUSE OF THE STRAINED STATE OF OUR RELATIONS, THIS YEAR WE WENT ALL-OUT TO CELEBRATE THE 200TH ANNIVERSARY OF OUR INDEPENDENCE. AROUND 1900 PERSONS WERE INVITED (INCLUDING MANY FROM VARIOUS PARTS OF THE COUNTRY WHO COULD NOT POSSIBLY ATTEND) AND NEARLY 900 OF THESE PERSONS ATTENDED THE RECEPTION. THE ATTENDANCE WAS VERY GOOD FROM ALL CATEGORIES EXCEPT VERY SENIOR GOVERNMENT LEADERS. NO MINISTERS ATTENDED NOR DID ANY ARMED FORCES COMMANDERS. SECRETARIES GENERAL OF VARIOUS MINISTRIES AND DEPUTY COMMANDERS DID, HOWEVER, SHOW UP.

2. FONMIN CAGLAYANGIL EXCUSED HIMSELF IN ADVANCE BY WRITING A LETTER SAYING HE WOULD BE INVOLVED IN "POLITICAL ACTIVITIES"

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AND UNABLE TO ATTEND. ON JULY 5, AMBASSADOR SPOKE WITH HIM

AT THE VENEZUELAN NATIONAL DAY RECEPTION AND CAGLAYANGIL AGAIN APOLOGIZED FOR NOT HAVE BEEN ABLE TO ATTEND AND SUGGESTED THAT HE CALL ON THE AMBASSADOR TO PAY HIS RESPECTS. (THE AMBASSADOR THANKED HIM FOR THIS GRACIOUS GESTURE, BUT SAID HE DID NOT THINK HE SHOULD FOLLOW THROUGH WITH IT IN VIEW OF THE MINISTER'S VERY HEAVY SCHEDULE.) SUBSEQUENTLY, THE AMBASSADOR TALKED WITH MFA DIRECTOR OF POLITICAL AFFAIRS TEZEL AND NOTED THAT IF GOT MINISTERS WERE TRYING TO MAKE A POINT BY NOT ATTENDING, THE POINT HAD BEEN TAKEN. TEZEL PROTESTED THAT GOT HAD NO SUCH INTENTION, BUT THAT GOT MINISTERS WERE SIMPLY OTHERWISE OCCUPIED ON THIS BUSY SUMMER WEEKEND.

3. REPUBLICAN PEOPLE'S PARTY (RPP) CHAIRMAN AND LEADER OF THE OPPOSITION, BULENT ECEVIT, ATTENDED THE RECEPTION, ALONG WITH A NUMBER OF PARLIAMENTARIANS FROM THE TWO MAJOR PARTIES.

4. COMMENT: DESPITE TEZEL'S PROTEST, WE BELIEVE GOT MINISTERS DELIBERATELY STAYED AWAY FROM THE RECEPTION. WE DO NOT CONSIDER IT SURPRISING THAT THEY SHOULD DECIDE TO DO SO GIVEN THE CONTINUING STRAIN IN U.S.-TURKISH RELATIONS. MOREOVER, THE DEMIREL GOVERNMENT IS OFTEN ACCUSED OF BEING PRO-AMERICAN AND IS VERY (PERHAPS EXCESSIVELY) SENSITIVE TO THE POLITICAL LIABILITIES THAT ATTENDANCE AT THE U.S. RECEPTION MIGHT ENTAIL IF THE U.S.-TURKISH DEFENSE COOPERATION AGREEMENT IS SUBSEQUENTLY DEFEATED BY THE U.S. CONGRESS.

5. THE ABSENCE OF TOP LEVEL GOT OFFICIALS WAS THE ONLY SOUR NOTE IN AN OTHERWISE VERY SUCCESSFUL CELEBRATION OF OUR BICENTENNIAL. NOT ONLY WAS THE LEVEL OF ATTENDANCE HIGH FOR MOST SEGMENTS OF THE TURKISH SOCIETY--THOSE WHO DID ATTEND WERE VERY CORDIAL IN THEIR EXPRESSIONS OF CONGRATULATIONS, AND THOSE WHO DID MENTION THE CURRENT STRAIN IN U.S.-TURKISH RELATIONS GENERALLY DID SO IN THE CONTEXT OF EXPRESSING THE HOPE FOR FUTURE IMPROVED RELATIONS. DURING A BRIEF PAGEANT WHICH WAS PRESENTED AT THE RECEPTION, A NUMBER OF TURKISH GUESTS SANG, ALONG WITH THE AMERICANS, SOME OF OUR BETTER KNOWN AMERICAN PATRIOTIC SONGS.

MACOMBER

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